

NFU Technically Speaking

e-news from the Science and Regulatory Affairs section of the NFU Policy Services Department

March 2014

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Commission aims to protect Europe's minor crops

The European commission has proposed an EU fund of €350,000 for minor uses of plant protection products. In a report submitted to the European parliament and council, it defines 'minor' as for use on niche crops with a high economic value but not considered as having enough marketing potential to be worth investment by the agro-pesticide industry. Aimed at protecting many species of vegetables, fruit, nurseries and flowers, the commission has rowed back from the €700,000 pot initially offered.

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Diabrotica restrictions lifted

UK plant health authorities have confirmed that from the 1 June 2014 Diabrotica will no longer be regarded as a "quarantine" pest in the EU, the control measures associated with quarantine measures for quarantine controls have long been considered disproportionate for grower affected. Read more [here](#).



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Feed Hygiene Advice for Farmers

The FSA has recently released new guidance on feed hygiene management plans (HACCP) for farmers. You can read more about the feed hygiene requirements for primary producers [here](#).

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Coroner warns of dangers from transporting livestock

The NFU is urging caution when transporting livestock in trailers after being notified of details of a recent fatal accident. Read more [here](#).

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The voice of British farming

NFU, Agriculture House, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ
Tel: 02476 858500 Fax: 02476 858501



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New fuel marker dye to prevent fuel fraud

The UK and Irish governments are to bring in a new marker dye for rebated fuel (red diesel) in an effort to reduce fuel fraud. Read more [here](#).

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Call for evidence - Animal and Farmer Health-and-wellbeing linked?



The Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) has begun a study into the relationship between the health and well-being of farm personnel and the welfare of the livestock for which they are responsible.

The NFU has been invited to respond in writing to this consultation, as well as providing verbal evidence during an interview on the 27th March and it is anticipated that one or two members of the NFU National Livestock or Dairy Board will take up the verbal evidence session invitation. **The closing date for this response is Monday 17th March.**

We need practical and honest evidence for this consultation response. The link to the consultation can be found on [NFUOnline](#) which details 6 questions posed by FAWC which you can either answer yourselves or send your responses directly to [Cat McLaughlin](#). We have deliberately made no attempt to prompt your responses by including suggestions as this is a totally subjective topic and there are no right or wrong answers. Responses will be kept anonymous unless you particularly give us permission to disclose identifying material.

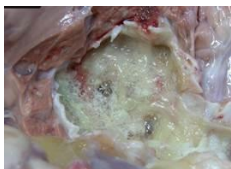
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March's NADIS Webinars available

NADIS (National Animal Disease Information Service) produces advanced training for on-farm disease recognition.



This March there is a specially commissioned webinar on managing milk fever. Milk fever is still one of the most common diseases of the calving cow; in this webinar Associate Professor Richard Laven BVetMed, PhD Lond. MRCVS looks at how to recognise treat and prevent this condition.



The [Parasite Forecast](#) outlines the parasitic challenge facing cattle and sheep in the different regions of the UK. This month's webinar includes planning for PGE in ewes at lambing, the risk of Nematodirus, chronic liver fluke and also covered are sheep scab and lungworm in cattle.

Parasite forecast:
Lungworm disease



NADIS publishes a monthly [Disease Alert](#) which brings attention to key diseases. During cold damp conditions, many pathogens can survive in the environment increasing the risk of disease, especially for young animals. In this webinar James Aitken BSc BVetMed MRCVS, of Orchard Veterinary Group in Glastonbury discusses calf scours and common diseases of new-born lambs, as well as how to best prevent these conditions.

Disease Alert:
Calf scour

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The Latest 'Skills Roundup' (March)



Every month the NFU puts together a list of some of the main agricultural and agriculture-related training courses and events by Region. For more information, please click [here](#) and open the link in the article.

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Get Mentoring Farming Project

Get Mentoring in Farming is a UK wide initiative looking to recruit and train 300 volunteer business mentors from the Farming Sector and to match them with farming related businesses who are looking for mentoring support. The initiative is funded by BIS and is being led by an organisation called SFEDI. The initiative aims to:



Stimulate demand for mentoring by matching new and existing farmers and owners of food related industries with members who understand their sector

Develop management and leadership skills, through effective mentoring to help farmers and food related industries to improve and grow

Use mentoring to encourage take up of specialise advice and support including farming specific initiatives

If you are interested in becoming a mentor and using your own experiences and expertise in the farming industry to help other business owners please [click here](#). Training will be provided through the initiative to help you develop the skills required to be an effective enterprise mentor.

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Deadlock forces Commission's hand on GM

On 11 February the European Commission was effectively forced to approve plans to grow the insect resistant GM maize Pioneer 1507. Member states were unable to reach a qualified majority either in favour or against the proposal to authorise the placing on the market of the product. As a result, and given the strong safety record given by the European Food Safety Authority, the Commission was left to automatically approve the proposal – twelve years after it was first put forward. This landmark move could spell the way forward for authorisation of other outstanding GM projects, although the highly political nature of the issue remains a significant barrier.

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Mapping the UK capacity for Agricultural Science

Agricultural development and sustainability is underpinned with strong research and innovation. The NFU has looked at whether Great Britain has the research capacity to deliver in the future in this interactive [map](#).



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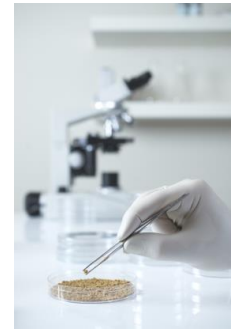
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A compromise on national decisions to ban GM?

On 3 March, the Environment Council discussed a new draft of proposed legislation put forward by the Greek Presidency to allow member states to ban or restrict GM plantings in their own territories on grounds other than safety. This is seen by some as the only way to break the deadlock in the approvals process but others see allowing bans based on issues other than a scientific assessment of safety as unpalatable and a dangerous precedent to set. The NFU is studying the text carefully and considering the possible impacts on farmers and growers. The Greeks' aim is to progress the text towards a vote in June.



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Changes to the TSB's KTNs



The 15 Knowledge Transfer Networks of the Technology Strategy Board will come into one new umbrella body, [Knowledge Transfer Network Ltd](#) on 1 April 2014. The work of the networks will continue, coordinating KT and fostering collaboration between business and the UK research base. Chris Warkup, who is currently director of the Biosciences KTN (i.e. that with closest relevance to productive agriculture) has been appointed as the first CEO of this new body. Chris has been a good friend to the NFU for many years and we look forward to continuing our work with him in his new role.

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Name	Panel Responsibilities	Contact Details
Amy Gray	Editor; Policy Board administration	amy.gray@nfu.org.uk
Ben Ellis	Farm safety and inputs; Animal transport; Transport issues	ben.ellis@nfu.org.uk
Catherine McLaughlin	Animal health and welfare; Veterinary medicines; Animal diseases	catherine.mclaughlin@nfu.org.uk
Don Pendergrast	Crop protection; Biocides; Reducing pesticides pollution	don.pendergrast@nfu.org.uk
Helen Ferrier	Science and Research policy; Biotechnology; Nutrition; Food safety and hygiene	helen.ferrier@nfu.org.uk
Lee Osborne	Better regulation agenda; Skills and Training	lee.osborne@nfu.org.uk

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If you no longer wish to receive Technically Speaking or if your email details have changed please email [Amy Gray](mailto:Amy.Gray@nfu.org.uk)

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